

ALAN PEMBERTON – A BRIEF SYNOPSIS

Alan Pemberton (full name Colonel Alan Brooke Pemberton CVO MBE Service No. 235904^[1]) served in the 2nd Battalion [Coldstream Guards](#) in the [British Army](#) in the [Second World War](#). He saw action in Europe in 1944/45 and was critically wounded in the arm on 13 February 1944 while engaged in intense fighting^[2] at Monte Ornito^[3] in [Lazio](#), Italy. Despite that, he saw further action in 1945 as the allies advanced from [Nijmegen](#)^[4], Holland through Germany.

After the [Second World War](#) ended, Alan Pemberton continued his distinguished career by seeing more action serving in Palestine (1946/47) and Malaya (1948/53). In Malaya he fought in the guerrilla war known as the [Malayan Emergency](#) and was promoted to ADC to [Field Marshall Sir Gerald Walter Robert Templer](#) who ultimately defeated the Malayan rebels, the [Malayan National Liberation Army](#).

Apart from serving in the UK after leaving Malaya, Alan Pemberton had various postings in the Caribbean (including Jamaica and [British Guiana](#)) from 1956 to 1963. He retired from the [British Army](#) on 13 March 1967 with the honorary rank of Colonel^[5]. After that, he worked with [British Intelligence](#), both [MI5](#) and [MI6](#), plus an assortment of other countries' intelligence agencies including the USA's [CIA](#).

From 1970 through to 1990 Alan Pemberton was the chairman (and director) of an "unconventional outfit" called Diversified Corporate Services Limited (DCS)^[6] which he founded. DCS was an English company (Registered No. 990443) and a clandestine Section within [MI6](#). DCS had subsidiary, associated and related or affiliated companies around the world during its corporate existence. It acted as a front or cut-out^[7] for [MI6](#) throughout its corporate life in the nineteen seventies and eighties. Even DCS itself was never approachable other than through fronts or cut outs including when fronting for the USA [Central Intelligence Agency](#)^[8].

DCS was unconventional or irregular as noted in an article^[12] by [Duncan Campbell](#) in the [New Statesman](#)^[10].

"First, using a team of specialists in surveillance, 'surreptitious entry', bugging, tapping, debugging and so on, they provided training for intelligence agencies of other governments which HMG was anxious to assist, but only at 'arm's length'. Second, DCS employees were able to 'freelance' for the Secret Service (MI6) carrying out overseas operations too hot for official involvement. ... it was an 'unusual' way for MI6 to work - though the word in this context seems to be a euphemism for 'irregular', rather than an index of rarity. DCS was 'never hired directly' ... 'but always through a cut-out'. However, operational reports, once completed, would be 'handed directly on to MI5 or MI6'."

In the [New Statesman](#) article^[12], [Duncan Campbell](#) highlighted a few of the areas that DCS worked in. The wider DCS group actually operated in all the [Five Eyes](#) countries, the Caribbean (notably the Bahamas), Haiti, Eire, Italy, Germany, Oman, Nigeria, Rhodesia, South Africa, Sudan, Iran and most Middle Eastern countries. The [New Statesman](#) article^[12] by [Duncan Campbell](#) also contained an explanation of just how difficult it was to determine

whose side of which conflict or political turmoil DCS was on. If nothing else, unlike the unassuming calm persona of the mild-mannered Alan Pemberton, DCS was controversial and habitually causing ripples in the swamps of disinformation underlying world headlines from 1970 to 1990.

For example, DCS advised [Harold Wilson](#) in his second term of office (1974/76) about the [Clockwork Orange plot](#) involving one of its directors (Colonel Peter John Goss ^[11]) and alleged [MI5](#) surveillance and how to circumvent it. DCS later advised [Robert Mugabe](#) how to avoid [MI6](#) surveillance during the notorious [Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in 1979](#) at [Lancaster House](#). Maybe these intriguing assignments were simply double or triple bluff operations.

Not dissimilarly, it was well-nigh impossible to determine whether DCS was disrupting and/or facilitating the initial investigations into what later became known as the [Iran–Contra](#) scandal. That sentiment is echoed by one [MI6](#) recruit, [Bill Fairclough](#), who worked with Alan Pemberton in the nineteen seventies and eighties. He worked as an agent for both [MI6](#) and the [CIA](#) (and therefore by default DCS) and in the mid-nineteen eighties carried out investigations into what later became known as the [Iran–Contra](#) scandal.

According to [Bill Fairclough](#), as detailed further in his biographies called [The Burlington Files](#), in the nineteen eighties it was difficult to discern who knew what and who was on whose side in both the [CIA](#) and [MI6](#) in the build up to the [Iran–Contra](#) scandal which nearly unseated [Ronald Reagan](#). Those factions investigating the initial allegations of wrongdoing (including the [FBI](#), [MI6](#) and [Faire Sans Dire's Bill Fairclough](#) and [Barrie Parkes](#)) were under surveillance as were those carrying out that surveillance. It was as though Western intelligence was chasing its own tail in ever increasing circles and had lost not only the plot and but also its moral compass.

DCS came in for much criticism both from within [MI5](#) and [MI6](#) and government circles. Its modus operandi using various corporate veils depending on the country of operation seemed inappropriate for covert activities. For example, in the UK it appeared to conform with most prevailing [Companies Act](#) disclosures thereby seemingly compromising its own security. Similarly, its operations outside the UK, such as in the Caribbean where Alan Pemberton had gathered much experience, were conducted in accordance with whatever threadbare "trusty" colonial laws applied thereto. Accordingly, setting aside disinformation, unnecessary disclosures about the whereabouts of DCS or who worked in it were made around the globe.

Indeed, as noted in the New Statesman article ^[12] by [Duncan Campbell](#) referred to above, lists of DCS (group) employees, recruits, shareholders and directors over two decades were in the public domain and read like a "Who's Who of the secret world" within which DCS operated. Maybe that is why Alan Pemberton opted for a non-corporate vehicle when helping [Barrie Northend Parkes BEM](#) and [Bill Fairclough](#) to establish [Faire Sans Dire](#) in 1978. For much of its life, even when supported by corporate vehicles, up until 2010 [Faire Sans Dire](#) was untraceable being de facto an unincorporated organisation with no visible public presence and no reporting requirements other than privately and when required to tax authorities such as the [Inland Revenue](#).

The DCS model adopted by [MI6](#) was to be ditched although other corporate associations with [British Intelligence](#) for other purposes such as through [Hakluyt & Company](#) continue to this day. Just why the DCS corporate or limited liability model was adopted ab initio remains a mystery. The likelihood of lawsuits against DCS was negligible given its sponsor. Furthermore, limited liability protection wasn't much of a defence against abduction, unlawful imprisonment, torture or murder at the hands of some despotic government. Authors Jonathan Block and Patrick Fitzgerald ^[15] who co-wrote [British Intelligence and Covert Action](#) ^[15] in 1983 were also critical of DCS because they saw it as becoming an embarrassment to [MI6](#) (see page 42 of the text). They cite 1973 when [The Observer](#), with DCS input, allegedly explained in depth how some of [MI6's](#) state-of-the-art surveillance equipment worked ^[20].

Nevertheless, notwithstanding the criticism, Alan Pemberton must have been assessed by the powers that be to have done more right than wrong as he was made a [Commander of The Royal Victorian Order](#) (CVO) in 1988 ^[13]. Earlier in 1961 ^[14] he had been made a [Member of the British Empire](#) (MBE) and subsequently appointed to [The Queen's Bodyguard of The Yeomen of the Guard](#).

DCS had been incorporated by Alan Pemberton on 29 September 1970 and almost 20 years later he dissolved it on 20 April 1989. From its incorporation until its dissolution, DCS was controlled by Alan Pemberton who at all times ostensibly held over 70% of its share capital. Some of the more noteworthy "mysterious" DCS (group) directors, shareholders, employees or recruits listed in [Companies House](#) records (containing full and detailed audited statutory accounts) included:

- Colonel Peter John Goss (Special Forces) ^[11] who worked in [British Intelligence](#) in [Ulster](#) as well as the [Cabinet Office](#) and being a member of the [Joint Intelligence Committee \(United Kingdom\)](#) at the time was key to the [Clockwork Orange](#) plot.
- Brigadier Peter 'Scrubber' Stewart-Richardson ^[16], a maverick if not eccentric British officer who was once refused permission to join the [Afghan Mujahideen](#) to fight the Russians.
- [Major General John Evelyn Anderson KBE](#) who was, inter alia, commander of the British [Royal Corps of Signals](#) as Signals Officer-in-Chief until his retirement in 1972.
- John Richard Pilkington ^[12] and Roy Astley Richards OBE ^[17] ([Winston Churchill's](#) bodyguard) who in retirement both acknowledged they had worked in DCS for [MI6](#).
- Major Freddy Mace ^[12] was a covert entry specialist better described as a cat burglar and whose skills included sabotage, silent killing, interrogation and technical intrusion. Apart from being associated with DCS, he was also a director of J Donne Holdings Limited ^[21] which despite its covert calling featured in [Hansard](#) ^[22] in 1977 when penetrating questions were raised about its ties with the [Admiralty Surface Weapons Establishment](#) at [Funtington](#), near [Chichester](#).

As DCS was being wound down in 1989/90 and for a short while after its dissolution, Alan Pemberton continued operating commercially as a director in companies such as Berkeley Travel Limited ^[18] and Abbey Fire Services Limited ^[19] and later retired in the mid nineteen nineties.

References

[1]

www.iwm.org.uk Alan Pemberton's oral account of his life in the British Army in his own words

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[2]

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A first-hand account of the fierce fighting at Monte Ornitto when the Nazis tried to retake Monte Ornitto early in 1944

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[3]

www.britain-at-war.org.uk An official account of the Battle of Ornitto

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[4]

www.saak.nl In 1944 Nijmegen was a key strategic target for the Allies' advance into Germany in the latter stages of the Second World War and featured in Richard Attenborough's 1977 film "A Bridge Too Far"

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[5]

archive.org

Alan Pemberton is listed at Reference 1728 (and elsewhere) in the official list of members of the Coldstream Guards 1946 - 1970.

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[6]

www.scribd.com All the corporate filings including full detailed audited statutory accounts lodged by DCS at Companies House from 1970 to 1989

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[7]

www.coursehero.com DCS was once publicly listed as a front for MI6

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[8]

www.secret-bases.co.uk UK Intelligence and Security Report August 2003, inter alia, suggesting DCS had been a front for the CIA (at page 14)

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[9]

www.duncancampbell.org An article in the New Statesman entitled "Salesman of the secret world" by Duncan Campbell dated 22 February 1980 about DCS and Alan Pemberton

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[10]

www.duncancampbell.org Index to Duncan Campbell's articles in the New Statesman

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[11]

www.specialforcesroh.com Colonel Peter John Goss (Special Forces) biography

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[12]

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[13]

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Queen's Birthday Honours List 1988 - Alan Pemberton awarded the CVO

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[14]

www.wikizero.com New Year's Honours List 1961 - Alan Pemberton awarded an MBE

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[15]

www.amazon.co.uk Amazon link to the book

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[16]

www.telegraph.co.uk Obituary of Brigadier Peter 'Scrubber' Stewart-Richardson

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[17]

www.express.co.uk An interesting newspaper article about Roy Astley Richards

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[18]

companycheck.co.uk

Berkeley Travel Limited corporate details - Company No. 01393511

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[19]

companycheck.co.uk

Abbey fire Services Limited corporate details - Company No. 02074984

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[20]

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This is apparently the article in question which does not seem to live up to what was claimed

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[21]

opencorporates.com

Corporate records of J. Donne Holdings Limited

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[22]

hansard.parliament.uk

There have been no contracts between the Admiralty Surface Weapons Establishment at Funtington, near Chichester, and John Donne Holdings.

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